KARO-ECHO Membership Meeting

March 9, 2020
Arlington Clubhouse

Attendees

KJ6AAT	David Swanson
KE6BEE	Howdy Goudey
KN6BVF	David Naisuler
KM6HFT	Curt Smith
KJ6IUV	Frans Kuypers
K6KOP	Jerry Michaels
KK6NDF	Hal Graboske
KC6OBK	Marian Gade
KM6UBY	Edward Carney
KJ6SWK	Annette McCoubrey
KM6UCF	Natalie DeJarlais
KK6UQX	Alvin Todd
KJ6WSS	Jay Fenton
KK6ZPM	Karen Leong Fenton

Minutes
February meeting minutes were approved.

Introductions/Announcements

- New attendee: Alvin Todd (KK6UQX) from Richmond.
- Several hams went to the El Cerrito police station recently to get CERT IDs that will allow them to enter City Hall in an emergency; ten hams now have IDs.

Working groups

Training and operations

- Report on February 29 FRS/GMRS training event (handheld radio class) - Dave/ Diane
  Dave said the class was well attended; they used diagrams & flip charts, explaining buttons and how to work the radio, followed by a drill where each person could talk on the radio. Scripts were provided. Attendees came from El Cerrito, Kensington, & Berkeley, and people were appreciative. Hal pointed out that this is a critical piece of the emergency communication network.

- The Spring KARO ECHO Simulated Emergency Test (SET) will be held on Saturday, 3/14/20 from 9:00-12:00

Radio exercise will be followed by debrief at Castro Clubhouse, 1420 Norvell St. Howdy plans to follow up with participants via email. The scenario is a hypothetical earthquake; participants will check in, report on the MM scale, be assigned tactical call signs (Howdy will test making tactical call signs more descriptive, such as street names -- in part because the CERT areas may change in the future.)

The focus of the SET will be on the message handling and logistics. We'll have assigned times for each operator to send a message; rather than scripting; each person will make up their own messages. We will use ICS 309 forms, and Howdy will send sample messages to participants.

Other advice:

- Remember to state your FCC callsign every ten minutes and when changing frequencies.
- Write messages down in advance for smoother communications.
- Write down messages in case you need to repeat sections of the message.
- Send messages slowly, because it takes time to write.
- Drop the mike frequently and allow the receiver to break in and request a faster or slower speed.
- Message numbers are assigned by the radio operator. It's the operator's record. The header remains the same if a relay is used.
- Field setup is an important part of the drill. There are clubhouse setups, portable antennas; moving around and changing role/location could be interesting.

- Upcoming: Net Control Instruction on April 4, 2020 at 1:00-3:00
  El Cerrito Community Center - Garden Room, 7007 Moeser Ln
  Diane will run ths class. Karen suggests using event registration software, such as Eventbrite.

Chief Grupalo is in charge of CERT training for the fire department and has asked for names of people who attend emergency preparedness events because it helps him with grant funding. Email him with lists of attendees.

Equipment and Infrastructure

- KCC reopening
- CERT EOC access cards
- Davis Donation
- Installed radio maintenance log startup

Antenna and feedline will be installed at the Kensington Clubhouse when possible.

Jay described his **portable antenna setup**. Edward got a $1300 grant that allowed them to build 4 kits. Portable antenna kits include the following:

- Brackets, which allow you to hook up to just about anything, including street signs.
- Feed line

- Adapter
- Wing nuts
- Magmount base
- Wrench
- U bolts
- Window washing pole that extends 6' to 24'.
- Antenna - Diamond 40" (Comet as well) - works great on GMRS.
- Flagpole holder can also be attached to a vehicle; used with a Comet and Diamond nr770hb antenna and an HT.
- Set up in 10 minutes; they had excellent results in El Cerrito and Richmond.

Karen is the point person for reserving the go kits.

Howdy described using a **mesh network**, which uses off-the-shelf Wi-Fi equipment that has been modified to permit equipment to be used on HAM frequencies. See AREDN for more information. You turn on the radio and if it has access to a node, it will announce it, and can bounce around a variety of points. You send data (not much voice) using an $80 antenna. SF has a lot of these. It's ham radio, all data, and not unlike a home network. You can move files, messages, and use VoIP phone, There's a group in Oakland where they're making these nodes; Dave can get more information for anyone who's interested. SF is excited and it's growing fast. Because the network can get large, you can get an Internet connection when yours is down if someone in the mesh network still has connectivity. Hal mentioned that NALCO Could come give a talk on this.

Dave requested radios and/or information on **cross-band repeaters** for a class he is teaching.

Has requested a **videographer** for the SET: David may know somebody.

We need a **maintenance team** to work on the installed radios at the firehouses as well as Hilltop school.

Marian moved to **adjourn** the meeting; Frans seconded.